

NBC MEET THE PRESS
9 September 1984

EXCERPTED

Reporter Bernard Kalb of NBC News; Secretary of State George Shultz

B. KALB: ...about the South Korean airliner, our position, the U.S. position has been that we did not know it was shot down until after it was shot down even though it had been off course for some period of time. SHULTZ: That's not a position, that's a statement of fact.

B. KALB: ...fact. Well, let me ask whether there was not a serious intelligence failure, and I ask it in this context. Suppose these were Russian aircraft going toward Alaska in that several hours flight, and our intelligence units in the Far East did not pick that up, isn't that by the U.S. fact position, isn't that an absolute declaration of a huge intelligence failure on the U.S. part? SHULTZ: Well, I don't believe so. After all the plane that was off course was over Soviet territory. We don't consider every airplane flying over Soviet territory to be some sort of a threat to us.